Christina Richardson: A day in the life of a golfer

Introduction

Golf is an activity that is a sport as well as something that people do to relax and have fun. This sport is very popular among so many different age groups and many different types of people. Although golf is very popular among people from all over the globe, I myself do not understand it. When I thought about what I would like to study for this assignment, I wanted to find something that I was not very knowledgeable about and that I just did not understand. Whenever golf was put on the television in my house I immediately started to get bored.

My fiancé is an avid golfer and I wanted to understand why he loved this sport so much. He always gets so happy when a big event comes on the television and he could not even contain his excitement when he got the new Tiger Woods golf game. So therein lays my interest in finding out about this sport called golf.

Methodology

The only way that I could gain some knowledge about golf was to actually go to the course with my fiancé and watch him play. I tried to ask him some questions while at home but I could not really get what he was saying. He said that he would be happy to take me with him so I could see for myself how exciting this game really is. Although I have a pretty open mind, I doubted that I would ever consider golf exciting.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The day that we went was Friday July 30, 2010 and the time that we arrived was 3:30 PM. The golf course that we decided to go to is called Downriver Golf Course in Spokane, WA. The afternoon was a bit overcast with a slight breeze, with a temperature of about 80 degrees.

This was all new to me, as I had never been on a golf course before, except on a miniature golf course about a hundred years ago. We decided to go on a week day so that it would not be too crowded and we did not want to interrupt any tournaments that may have been going on. I really did not know what except a bunch of older men in plaid pants and visors on. I know this was a generalization but it was the only thing that I thought of when I thought of golf.

When we arrived, we went to the store to purchase his round of golf and a golf cart. From what I understand you could walk but getting a cart in much more practical. It does cost a little more money but really worth it. He decided just to play nine holes instead of 18 because of the time of day that we chose to go.

As we got in the cart to go find the first hole, I was filled with apprehension because I could not help but think this is going to be one on the most boring times in my life. Like I said, I am open-minded but I could not comprehend the excitement that my fiancé was exhibiting. I was glad to be doing something productive while on this journey though, at least I had a reason to be out there. So off we went!

As we neared the first hole I felt the breeze and I wondered if the wind had any effect on the ball. I asked him this and he said if it is really windy then yes but the light breeze really has no effect. It was okay today. As I looked around I noticed the people in front of us were made up of four people, it looked like it was two older couples. I also noticed quite a few more groups of people that were playing together. I asked Sean if he would rather play alone or with others. He responded that he liked to practice by himself but in serious games, he would rather play with his friends. It seemed to me that most of the people on the course were with a group. I asked him what the difference was and he said that he liked to practice by himself so that if he was doing poorly, his friends would not be there the make fun of him all day.

As we continued on to the other holes, I discovered that golf, like many other sports, has its own language. There were terms associated with golf that could not be used anywhere else. As we were going along, occasionally he would say something that I did not understand and I had to ask him what that meant. He explained all of the terminology to me in a way that even a child could understand. He was happy to explain it all to me. I think that he just enjoyed explaining a sport that he loves so much.

He also explained that not only are there are technical rules in this game but unwritten rules that most golfers know. There are a lot or things that are common courtesies in the game of golf. For example, you are never supposed to walk over a golfer’s line of sight when they are putting, it is disrespectful. And also, for obvious safety reasons, you have to wait to hit your ball until the person in front of you is off the green.

There were also things that the golfers do during the game to keep their clubs clean. When Sean hit a clump of grass, he immediately cleaned off his club. I asked why he was doing that and he said that the dirt could alter the path of the ball when he hit it. He also said that it was customary for the golfer to put the clump of grass back into the ground. Another thing that I observed him do, was when his ball went into the sand, he used the brush provided to comb the sand back into place.

As we went through the course, I began to understand the game a little more. In that understanding, I also began to feel the excitement that he was feeling, especially when he made a good shot. I realized that there was much more to this sport than I initially thought.

When we finished up and I saw his face, I saw something that made me smile. He had this look of contentment about him and he seemed more relaxed than when we first arrived. He thanked me for going with him and said that he had a good time. It was then that I realized that I too, had a good time.

Conclusion

On the ride home I thought about my experiences at the golf course and I decided that I was happy that this was the subject that I had chosen to write about. There were a few reasons as to why. One reason was that I got the chance to learn about something that I had no prior knowledge about. Another reason was that I got to share something with my fiancé that made him happy.

I made the observation that this sport seemed to be a bonding experience. As Sean was telling me of past experiences of golfing with his friends, he seemed to remember fondly the fun they had. I think, like many other sports, there was a competitive edge but was all in good fun.

I still had some questions in my mind as to how active this sport really was and why Sean was always sore after playing a round of golf. I also wondered how others played, if they got as animated as Sean or it if they were a little more subdued. The times that I had seen it on television, they always seemed almost somber. I figured the only way to find out the answers to my questions was to actually play myself. That will have to be another day though!

So at the end of the day I found out that a sport I thought could not have been more boring is actually interesting. There is a lot that goes into the game of golf that one would not think of right off the bat. As it was explained to me, golf is all about physics. I learned that different clubs help you go different distances and there is a science to it that takes some thought. I found out from the beginning that it took concentration and to be quite when Sean was hitting the ball. Not only is it a mental game but a physical one. Of that I had my doubts, unless you were walking the course instead of riding in a cart of course.

I am really glad that I had this opportunity to observe something different and out of my normal spectrum. I learned quite a lot and will probably not walk out of the room next time golf is on the television. I might even watch and ask more questions.